

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT**

**ROUTING SLIP**

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| 8  | DDS&T      |        |      |      |         |
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| 11 | IG         |        |      |      |         |
| 12 | Compt      |        |      |      |         |
| 13 | D/OCA      |        | X    |      |         |
| 14 | D/PAO      | X      |      |      |         |
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SUSPENSE \_\_\_\_\_  
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Remarks

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Ex \_\_\_\_\_ ary

30 March 1988

Date

**3637** (10-81)

ER 88-1123x

STAT

Patricia Rowley Edwards

March 22, 1988

William H. Webster  
Director of Central Intelligence  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Mr. Webster,

STAT  
STAT

It was April 22, 1970, at [redacted] Middle School in [redacted] A thirteen-year-old girl labored over a papier mache class project with her best friend in their seventh-grade studies class. She looked up to see her minister come through the door. Before he said her name, she knew he came for her, and that her life was changed forever.

And it was. The girl was me. The minister came to tell me my father, Lt. Col. Charles Stoddard Rowley, a navigator on a U. S. Air Force AC-130, had been shot down in Southeast Asia. My mother, my two brothers and I were told a search was under way. Every hour we hoped to know more. but for close to eighteen years, we learned little else.

Then a few months ago, on a chilly November evening, I came home from my job working with mentally handicapped adults. A friend handed me the newest LIFE magazine. On page 119, I found an article titled "looking for the Mysterious 'Mr. Roly,'" and underneath the headline was a black and white photo of a middle-aged Caucasian standing in what appeared to be a clearing in a Southeast Asian jungle. The story detailed how this picture of a man who went by "Roly" had been smuggled out of Laos, and how it allegedly depicts an American held there in a secret prison camp. The resemblance to my father, in name and physical features, while inconclusive, is stunning.

I was stunned, alright. I was also angry, so much so that my first reaction was to hurl the magazine across the room. You see, this was not only the first time I had seen the picture; this was the first time I knew that it even existed. This, despite claims by DIA officials reported in the magazine story that they consulted family members who had seen the picture and supposedly determined it could not be my father.

I enclose the article for your consideration. But this was not the first possible sighting of my father. On June 13, 1978, my brother Charles and I attended a government "status review hearing" on my father's case. The day before, we were presented with a stack of declassified documents--hardly, I might add, in sufficient time for us to adequately review them before the



P-311-IR

hearing. We learned of a reported sighting of my Dad in a propaganda film that was shown at the Hanoi Hilton prison camp.

I don't believe we would have ever learned of that had my brother not pushed for the declassification of other material after we were given our first batch of papers just before the hearing. We were also led to believe still more papers existed relating to my father's case that continued to be classified as secret. I think you can understand how we would like to decide for ourselves what is relevant and what is not, and how we find it difficult to believe that releasing any and all documents pertaining to my father could jeopardize national security eighteen years after he was shot down!

And let me make it clear: I am a star-spangled, red-white-and-blue patriot who believes very much in this country. That should not be surprising, considering what my father has sacrificed for it. I just want to exercise my rights as a citizen to see that the rights of my father and those like him are protected, and to see the rights of those they left behind are too.

With the passage of time we should get more answers about what happened to that gunship that crash-landed in a jungle out of sight from any American troops. Instead, new questions surface, questions about the propaganda film, questions about the picture of "Mr. Roly".

Please help us find an avenue to those answers. I don't think it is a matter of our government having the answers and refusing to give them to us, but I think that together, we might find a way. I await your reply. Please remember how long we have been waiting.

Sincerely,

*Patricia Rowley Edwards*  
Patricia Rowley Edwards

As official representative of the following organizations:

|                                |                        |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| AMVETS POST #42 & AUXILIARY    | Shelby, North Carolina |
| DAV CHAPTER #18 & AUXILIARY    | Shelby, North Carolina |
| AMER. LEGION POST #82 & AUX.   | Shelby, North Carolina |
| VFW POST # 8066 & AUXILIARY    | Shelby, North Carolina |
| SHELBY DET. MARINE CORP LEAGUE | Shelby, North Carolina |

We would like to make note, that we support the above letter 100%. We believe as veterans that it is time to clear up any doubts or questions concerning American MIA'S.

Sincerely

*Barry C. Henry, Jr.*  
President  
Cleveland County

ROBERT C. SMITH  
1ST DISTRICT, NEW HAMPSHIRE

COMMITTEES:  
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

# Congress of the United States House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

March 17, 1988

WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
115 CANNON BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-5456

DISTRICT OFFICES:  
340 COMMERCIAL STREET  
MANCHESTER, NH 03101  
(603) 644-3367

90 WASHINGTON STREET  
DOVER, NH 03820  
(603) 742-0404

P.O. BOX 737  
WOLFEBORO, NH 03894  
(603) 569-4993

NEW HAMPSHIRE TOLL FREE NUMBER  
1-800-626-2690

STAT

Ms. Patty Edwards

Dear Patty:

Knowing of your involvement in the POW-MIA issue, I am sure you are familiar with legislation I have introduced to declassify livesighting information of Americans being held in Southeast Asia. The bill (H.R. 2260) would mandate that all livesighting information (with the exception of sources and methods of intelligence collection) be made accessible to the families and the American people.

Stephen J. Solarz, Chairman of the Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee (House Foreign Affairs Committee), has agreed to hold an open hearing on this legislation Tuesday, March 29, 1988 at 2:00 P.M. The hearing will take place here on Capitol Hill in a committee room. The Subcommittee is in the process of obtaining a location. I suggest that you contact either Mary Boyle at the Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee (Tel: 202-226-7801) or Barbara Noel in my office (202-225-5456) prior to the hearing date to obtain the room location. It is my understanding that representatives from the Defense Department, the State Department, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and the National League of Families will appear in opposition to the bill.

In addition to my supportive testimony, Chairman Solarz is permitting the participation of only one supporting family member. Retired Army Colonel, Earl Hopper of Glendale, Arizona (father of unreturned POW -- LTC Earl P. Hopper, Jr., and a founding member of the National League of POW/MIA Families) has been selected to speak on behalf of the families who support H.R. 2260.

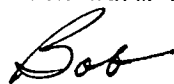
If you are a POW/MIA family member and believe that livesighting information on your loved one has been denied to you or withheld by any agency of the U.S. Government, please write your personal statement describing the circumstances. If you are not a family member and wish to write a statement in support of H.R. 2260, I would be pleased to receive your comments.

Ms. Patty Edwards  
Page 2  
March 17, 1988

It was my hope that any interested parties wishing to testify would be granted the opportunity. Because this is not possible, it is my intention to ask for unanimous consent that these written statements be included in the hearing record. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE. I ask that you submit these statements to me (Congressman Robert C. Smith, 115 Cannon H.O.B., Washington, D. C. 20515, ATTN: Barbara Noel) no later than Friday, March 25.

Remember, this is an open hearing and I hope you will be able to attend.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bob", written in dark ink.

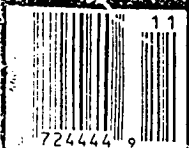
Robert C. Smith

RCS:bn

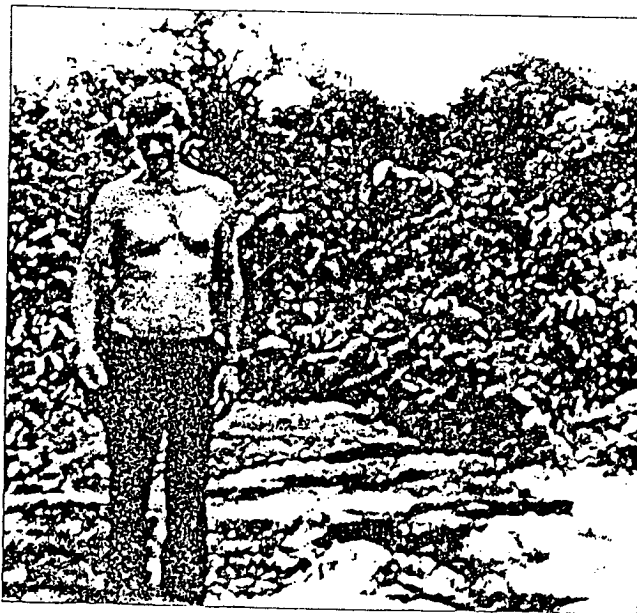
**ARE ANY STILL  
ALIVE?**

**WAR**

**25 COMPELLING CASES FROM VIETNAM**



# LOOKING FOR THE MYSTERIOUS 'MR. ROLY'



Roly and Rowley: Some people believe the picture of "Mr. Roly" at top, smuggled out of Laos last summer, is Lt. Col. Charles Rowley, above at 23 with wife Virginia. The airman, if alive today, would be 56.

Pieces of an MIA puzzle: A picture, a name and a cast of strange bedfellows

framed condolence letter from Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter hangs on the wall. "I have that up more as a joke," he says. He attributes his cynicism to years in which, contrary to the Defense Intelligence Agency's stated procedures, he says crucial information on his father's case was kept from him.

Long ago Chuck Rowley came to terms with the ambiguities surrounding his father's fate. He has reached the conclusion that if he wasn't killed in the plane crash, he was probably killed in captivity. "At least that's what I have to believe to sleep at night," he says. But then along comes this picture. It shows a haggard man, bare-chested, walking through a field toward the camera. A note that arrives with it says the picture is of a Mr. Roly. Could Roly be Chuck Rowley's father? Or is it, like so much MIA "evidence," another signpost on a road that leads nowhere?

These questions may never be answered. Yet the story of the Mr. Roly picture is an example of the maddening pursuit of information about an MIA. It is, as well, a tale of a Laotian refugee eager to see democracy brought to his homeland and of a Nashville electronics salesman who wants to help him; of two men, claiming to be former U.S. soldiers, plotting an audacious rescue mission and of a mysterious source of money that will finance the project.

The saga begins in Nashville with the friendship of refugee Kham-bang Sibounheuang, 42, and salesman Frank Lockhart, 35. Kham-bang, who once served in the Royal Laotian Army, has lived in the U.S. since 1975. He proudly displays a photograph of himself with former Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander taken at a 1985 gathering honoring the state's refugees. For two years he has worked as a security guard in the Nashville neighborhood of Bellevue.

Kham-bang became a U.S. citizen in 1984, but his heart remains in Southeast Asia. Like other Laotian exiles, he dreams of returning to the country of his birth after the overthrow of the Hanoi-supported com-

Chuck Rowley, a 33-year-old Margate, Fla., policeman, looked carefully at the muddy black-and-white print in front of him, took another look and then, bringing it within a few inches of his eyes, looked once again. "I don't know," he said of the picture recently smuggled out of Laos. "It's hard to imagine what my father would look like if he had been held captive all these years."

On April 22, 1970, Lt. Col. Charles Stoddard Rowley Sr. was navigating an armed reconnaissance mission over Laos when enemy fire struck the rear of his aircraft. The plane crashed 90 seconds later, time enough for the 11-man crew to bail out. In fact, one man aboard that flight, Sgt. Eugene L. Fields, did parachute to safety. The rest have never been found.

Chuck Rowley was 15 at the time his father was lost. Today a corner of his bedroom stands as a bittersweet shrine. On his dresser top is a blue cap with the emblem, "AC-130 Spectre Gunship," his father's plane. A

mount Pathet Lao. He told Lockhart not long after they met last year through Lockhart's job at the Circuit City electronics store in Nashville, "Before Laos can be free, the Western world must learn our story."

To help Khambang convey the essential message, Lockhart decided to collaborate with the Laotian on a book. As a Ph.D. in psychology, Lockhart had shown a flare for writing; now, he thought he might have a fascinating subject to write about. Before long, however, Lockhart learned something that made Khambang's account even more interesting. Through friends in Thailand, Khambang had been receiving information from the Khouankh Kousat, a little-known Laotian resistance group, about American prisoners of war being held in his homeland. He would then pass on certain reports by phone to two Americans, Lance Trimmer and Gordon Wilson, whom he had met through his work as president of a Laotian-American group.

The information, while sketchy, was certainly tantalizing. Khambang showed Lockhart letters in which the names of several supposed MIAs were listed: "Mr. Morgan," "Lector Fry" and "Billy Benfratton"—names that corresponded roughly to names of men listed as MIA. But there was more: Khambang's contacts claimed to know that these men, plus three others for whom they did not have names, were being held in a mountain cave about 15 miles from the Vietnam border in the district of Sepone, near the village of Ban Boualapha. In one letter the contacts announced that Mr. Morgan had been moved to Hanoi, leaving five men in the cave. In another they spoke of 25 other American POWs spread out around the same area in small camps. In a third letter the resistance forces wrote that every two weeks helicopters would airlift food and medical supplies to the cave, where, the writer maintained, Americans were being forced to repair equipment left by U.S. forces after the war.

The letters had maps showing the location of the cave, but Wilson and Trimmer wanted more concrete evidence, and they requested that Khambang introduce them to his uncle and mentor, Gen. Kong Le. Kong, a paratrooper who led a coup d'état in Laos in 1960, was a key military commander until he was forced into exile in 1960. He now lives in Paris and remains a spiritual leader of the Khouankh Kousat. Trimmer and Wilson explained to Khambang that they hoped to mount a rescue mission in Laos. If Kong Le were to ask his followers to gather irrefutable POW documentation—photos, signatures—they, Trimmer and Wil-



The refugee and the salesman: Laotian American Khambang Sibounheuang (in his beat as a Nashville security guard) confided information on American POWs in Laos to Frank Lockhart, a part-time electronics equipment salesman.



son, would be able to proceed with complete confidence. In March they sent Khambang a round-trip ticket to Paris. At Khambang's urging, Lockhart decided to join his friend.

**A**t the time, Khambang knew little about his two American colleagues, Trimmer and Wilson. Wilson had identified himself as a former Army paratrooper and Trimmer as a retired Green Beret, but Khambang had all along assumed that they worked for a government agency, most likely the CIA. Khambang figured that if he helped them, they would eventually assist him and his uncle in the fight to bring democracy to Laos. Today, Wilson and Trimmer claim they never told Khambang that they worked for the

government or the CIA, but the pair appeared to be content to let Khambang and Kong Le assume that they were acting in an official capacity.

But something about the American operatives had begun to concern Khambang. For instance, he had no permanent address or phone number for either of them. Seemingly always on the move, Trimmer called him from places like Oklahoma, Montana, California. And there were times when he called Khambang just minutes after Khambang had spoken to Kong Le or to an official at the DIA. Trimmer questioned him on matters that seemed to come right out of these conversations.

When they all assembled in Paris, Wilson and Trimmer made it clear they wanted no one to know of their activities. They immediately ditched Lockhart, whom they were surprised Khambang had brought

along. Wilson and Trimmer did two things out of character with their desire for secrecy. Wilson left his briefcase in the hotel with Lockhart, and after 10 minutes of protest, Wilson and Trimmer reluctantly allowed the meeting with Kong Le to be videotaped with a machine Khambang had brought from Nashville. Kong Le insisted that he would be able to get more support from his top generals if he had a visual record of his conference with the two Americans.

Meanwhile, in his Paris room, Lockhart stared at Wilson's briefcase, wondering what secrets were inside. Despite a powerful curiosity, Lockhart refrained from opening the case, fearful that it might have been booby-trapped and triggered to eliminate him now that he knew about the clandestine meeting. Lockhart jumped when the phone rang. It turned out to be his wife calling from Nashville.

The following evening Lockhart watched the video. On the tape the four men were seated around a table. "Mr. Trimmer and I both are interested in helping the Free Lao movement," Wilson began. "But one of our problems is that we get reports of live Americans in Laos, and when the reports are checked out, we find the information is old or false." Kong Le nodded in agreement. "It is —



very important that we get true information," added Trimmer, "signatures, biographies. Then there's many things we'll be able to do." Trimmer told Kong Le of reports that China had received several hundred American POWs from North Vietnam about a year ago. Could his forces find out if those reports were true? Kong Le acknowledged that they could. Then Wilson announced, "We're going to make a concerted effort beginning today to help the Free Lao movement much more than we have in the past. I can get clothing, and I can get medicine. That's no problem. Money is a little more difficult because everybody in the United States now is thinking about the contras.... The one thing that will cause you to receive a lot of money is if we get one American back from Laos. If we get just one American out of there, there'll be unlimited money for you." Said Trimmer: "All the support in the world."

**T**he meeting ended with an agreement that Khambang would soon rendezvous with Trimmer and Wilson in Birmingham, Ala., to iron out details on the transfer of clothing and medical supplies to the Kabounkanh Kousat. Meanwhile, Kong Le would make an urgent request that his followers gather proof of the existence of American POWs. When they were satisfied with the evidence, Trimmer, Wilson and Khambang would go to Thailand to orchestrate the rescue mission. There was talk of the involvement of a specially trained group of Americans for the mission itself. But the actual planning was left to be worked out later.

Despite lingering doubts about Trimmer and Wilson, Lockhart and the two Laotians were excited by the agreement as they celebrated over dinner at Kong Le's Paris home. If American POWs emerged with the help of the resistance fighters, they decided, the U.S. would be forever indebted to them, and the Kabounkanh Kousat would then be able to count on America's help in returning Kong Le to a position of leadership in his native country.

When the time came for Khambang's Birmingham meeting, neither Trimmer nor Wilson showed up. Khambang and Lockhart were nettled by the sudden disappearance of the two shadowy figures. Eighteen days later, Wilson called Khambang and explained his absence by saying, "Have you been watching TV lately?" Khambang and Lockhart regarded this as a reference to the Iran-contra hearings, then in their fourth week. Lockhart speculated that Trimmer and Wilson were on a quasi-official covert mission that had to



The general and the middlemen: Former Laotian leader Gen. Kong Le (leaning against tree with his bodyguard) was offered "unlimited money" for his assistance in a POW rescue mission. In a videotape of a planning session Kong Le gestures to Gordon Wilson (left) and Lance Trimmer (right), who ask him to provide proof of MIAs held captive in Vietnam.

graph is of a Mr. Roly," said an accompanying letter. "I think that is his name. That is what they call him in the POW camp. It may be a nickname. They gave me this photograph to prove their integrity. I collected 2,000 baht (\$80) to pay them for this picture because I have examined it and I am positive that the picture is authentic."

Lockhart and Khambang looked at the picture of Mr. Roly and tried to decide what to do next. The significance of the discovery was beginning to dawn on both men. If Roly were alive and they could locate him, it would be a singular breakthrough in the MIA problem. Despite his fears that the mounting time away from work was jeopardizing his job, Lockhart flew to Washington, D.C., to show the photographs to Eugene "Red" McDaniel, friend of billionaire MIA activist Ross Perot and director of the American Defense Foundation, a pro-military lobby. McDaniel was intrigued. Looking through a list of MIAs, Lockhart decided that the picture, if legitimate, could only be that of Lt. Col. Charles S. Rowley. McDaniel offered to get verification from the Defense Intelligence Agency. When there was no progress for several weeks, Lockhart became impatient and decided to track down the Rowley family himself.

Lockhart learned that Rowley had grown up in Riverton, Conn. Eventually, through contacts, Lockhart received high school pictures of Rowley from his aunt. One of them showed him as senior class president. Lockhart compared photographs and began to see resemblances between the boy as he was at 17 and the man. Encouraged, Lockhart expanded his search.

Most of the Rowley family, as it turned out, had left Connecticut for Florida. Lockhart decided to start with Charles Rowley's brother, Walter, now living in Cocoa, Fla.

Walter Rowley stared at the picture and immediately discounted it. "If he were taken prisoner," he protested, "he wouldn't be the kind of person to sit calmly by. He would try to get away. I don't know. The build looks different. The nose looks different. No. No. By no stretch of the imagination could it be him. He would never have grown his hair like that. Eyes? It's hard to tell. He's looking down in the picture. Mouth? That's not an expression of his. →



be called off because, like the Iran-contra affair, it involved secret activities on the part of the U.S. government. Speculation aside, it now appeared that the deal so carefully worked out in Paris had fallen through. The press delivered the next update: On August 13, Lance Trimmer, identified as a former Green Beret, was arrested at the Canadian border as a material witness

in a federal investigation of illegal explosives trafficking.

The Laotians, however, had already begun to meet their part of the bargain. Kong Le's request to the resistance troops was fulfilled. Unaware that the agreement had fallen through, his men, so they claimed, had bribed a Pathet Lao prison guard and delivered a photograph to Khambang. "The enclosed photo-



The survivor and the brother: Sgt. Eugene Fields (top), the only man known to have lived through the crash of the armed cargo plane on which Rowley was a crewman, says the picture might be of Rowley. Walter Rowley is doubtful. He says his brother was a good military man who would "square his shoulders for a photograph."

And the shoulders? Well, remember, Charles was a military man. He would have had enough pride to at least square his shoulders for a photograph. No, this looks like all those Holocaust pictures you see." Walter Rowley seemed intent on preserving his brother's reputation, even at the expense of a hope that he could be alive. Then another thought hit him. "I guess that when you come down to it I look at this man and think he's been through so much that I keep hoping it's not Charles."

Still, reasons to treat the picture seriously kept mounting. Rowley's ex-wife, Virginia (they divorced before he left for Vietnam), noted that Charles would have been a good catch for the enemy. "He was a Mercury space program expert," she said from her mental health clinic office in Ft. Pierce, Fla. "And he had devel-

oped the idea of putting electronic equipment on planes to track manned satellites."

Lockhart then heard that one of Rowley's crew members, Donald Lint, might have survived the crash. Donald Lint Sr., a Des Moines, Iowa, businessman, claims that a picture of his son in a POW uniform was published in a Laotian newspaper two weeks after the plane was shot down. The sister of another missing crewman claims that the sole known survivor of the crash, Eugene Fields, once reported that shortly before he bailed out he ran to the cockpit and noticed the seats were empty. This suggests that the rest of the crew could have jumped ahead of Fields.

Finally, Charles Rowley was supposedly seen in a propaganda film shown to prisoners held at the Hoa Lo (Hanoi Hilton) prison in 1973. Disturbingly, although the sighting was reported that year—by returning POW Larry Stark—it wasn't until 1978 that a Rowley family member learned about it and then only because Chuck Rowley found the reference tucked in an Air Force file on his father.

Contacted recently, Stark said he

wasn't so sure that his identification was correct. He was bothered, however, that the DIA never followed up. The DIA did finally respond to the Mr. Roly picture. The agency told Red McDaniel that it had probably been taken from a propaganda film. That wouldn't help prove that Rowley was alive today, but it could be evidence that he had survived the crash.

The DIA's official response was less informative. It said only that the Mr. Roly picture would be "erroneously identified as Charles S. Rowley." The agency gave two reasons for its conclusion: First, photo analysts at the FBI, CIA and DIA compared the photo with a confirmed picture of Charles Rowley and decided it did not represent the same person. Second, the agency claimed to have consulted family members who had seen the picture and also found it did not represent Rowley. In fact, the DIA, through the Air Force, contacted only one relative, Rosabelle Rowley, Charles Rowley's mother.

Today, Gen. Kong Le is a disappointed man. His hopes for a rescue of American POWs leading to U.S. support for his cause have been dashed. He is convinced that Trimmer and Wilson were working for the U.S. government, despite their later denials. "Maybe it's a shrewd maneuver," he says. "Maybe the government does in secret what a government cannot do openly." At least he would like to think that. He continues to view Trimmer and Wilson as "good men," patriots who love their country.

Meanwhile, Kong Le's resistance forces continue to provide sketchy information to Khambang based on POW rumors they pick up on their forays across the Mekong River. They say that they are ready and eager to provide further documentation of the POWs, but they need money to do so. They write wanting to know what happened to the picture they provided of Mr. Roly and when the rescue mission will be mounted. When they read these letters, Lockhart and Khambang feel nothing but frustration. The Kabounkanh Kousat has had a dubious reputation in Bangkok as the purveyor of counterfeit MIA dog tags and remains. Yet Khambang and Lockhart believe the men who contacted them from Thailand are telling the truth.

Despite its doubts, the Rowley family continues to believe that the picture is probably not Charles. "I don't think it is my father," says Chuck, "but I'm glad somebody else does." Yet the question persists: Could Charles Rowley be alive? Eugene L. Fields, the sole survivor of

the AC-130 crash, retired from the Air Force in 1980. Today he lives near Lake Tahoe, Calif., where he confesses to feeling more than a little awkward about being the only one on that flight to return. "There was just one accident," he said recently, "but forty or fifty lives were changed, and I don't like being the fat, dumb and happy one who survived to talk about it."

Fields recalled that after the aircraft was hit, a fire broke out near the rear exit. He and another crew member attempted to extinguish the fire in midair. Dense smoke forced them to retreat. Fields said he felt his way to the right scanner window. He "crawled up to the window and fell out," passing within inches of a propeller. He didn't think anyone got out before him. (He denied reporting that he had checked the cockpit before leaving the plane.) He said that anyone who left after him would have to have chosen an equally unorthodox exit, since the other forward ones were blocked.

As he descended, Fields watched the plane crash. On the ground, he was unable to establish radio contact with any other crew member. The area was thought to be dense with enemy troops. When a search and recovery team responded to his call, Fields radioed the direction from which he heard suspicious sounds, and the rescue aircraft fired into the area. "They had to be real good or they would have gotten me," he said. "Some of the strikes were real close." Thirteen hours after Fields was recovered, a search for other survivors was called off.

Fields said that he has spent "several thousand hours" going over those facts. "God knows," he said, "that I hope every single one of them is alive today, but I don't think any of them is."

That was where the matter rested until Fields saw the Mr. Roly photograph. "The picture," he said, his voice tense, "it could be Rowley. His hair was never that long, but it could have grown. It could be him, but I'm not sure."

Then he made an offer that seemed to open up the Rowley case yet again. "Dozens of times over the years, I've satisfied my mind about the crash," he said, "and then something else pops up—like this picture. I'd like to get all the families together, sit them down and tell them everything I know, in confidence. It may take eight, ten hours, but I'm ready to do it." Does Eugene Fields have something to add to what he's said officially over the years? "Maybe." Will it counter what the Air Force has already said? "The Air Force hasn't said everything." Might it make one believe that this picture is the real thing? "No comment," answered Eugene Fields.



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

**William M. Baker**  
Director, Public Affairs  
(703) 482-7676

2 May 1998

STAT

Mrs. Patricia Rowley Edwards

Dear Mrs. Edwards:

I am responding to your letter of 22 March to Judge William H. Webster, who asked me to find out what I could about your father's disappearance. I can well understand your anguish and frustration--the fate of our missing colleagues, friends and relatives is one that has been a focus of intelligence activity ever since the late 1960s. We have been diligent in following leads from refugees, alleged POW sightings and other such information, but the results have not been encouraging. Nevertheless, I want to assure you that we are not going to cease our efforts while there is the possibility that even one American can be found.

Specifically, in regard to your father's case, I'm afraid that expert analysts were unable to confirm that the photographs you mention were really of your father. I know that must be hard to accept, but I wouldn't want to give you false hope. This only means that we continue to pursue the possibility that your father and other MIA's might be alive, until such time as we can develop information that might clarify the situation.

We appreciate the support that you have been given by the veterans organizations in your area. Be assured that we want to resolve this issue as much as other Americans. We will continue to explore every avenue, follow up every lead, question every source, and do all we can to find our missing men. Neither we nor the American people will accept any less.

Sincerely,

*William M. Baker*  
William M. Baker

P-311-IR